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Dr. Mahesh Kumar
Associate Professor, Physical
Education, C.R.M. Jat College,
Hisar, Haryana, India

Role of Media in Sports

Dr. Mahesh Kumar

Abstract

Sports and media have both a global and a local operation. They are bound to work together. The value of sport to the companies has increased very much and companies are investing a lot in the sport. The companies raise from time to time, the different issues relating to sports and that is beneficial to the sports. The media has influenced the sport very much and it has been also accepted by the sports bodies and athletes. Sports media has promoted the values associated with capitalism, nationalism and racism. The media has also promoted the viewers, dramatization and personalization.

Keywords: Media in Sports, capitalism, nationalism and racism

Introduction

Sport (or sports) in all forms of usually competitive physical activity which, through casual or organized participation, aim to use, maintain or improve physical ability and skills while providing entertainment to participants and in some cases, spectators either in teams or competing as individuals. Anyone can take part in sports.

Sport is generally recognized as activities which are based in physical athleticism or physical dexterity. A number of competitive, but non-physical, activities claim recognition as mind sports. The International Olympic Committee (through ARISF) recognizes both chess and bridge as bonafide sports and Sport Accord, the international sports federation association, recognizes five non-physical sports although limits the amount of mind games which can be admitted as sports. Sports are usually governed by a set of rules or customs, which serve to ensure fair competition. Winning can be determined by physical events such as scoring goals or crossing a line first, or by the determination of judges who are scoring elements of the sporting performance, including objective or subjective measures such as technical performance or artistic impression.

In organized sport, records of performance are often kept and for popular sports, this information may be widely announced or reported in sport news. In addition, sport is a major source of entertainment for non-participants.

According to A.T. Kearney, a consultancy, the global sporting industry is worth upto \$ 620 billion as of 2013. Broadcasting is the distribution of audio and/or video content to a dispersed audience via any electronic mass communications medium. The term 'broadcasting' derived from the method of sowing seeds in a field by casting them broadly about, was originated in the early days of radio to distinguish radio broadcasting from methods using wired transmission (as in telegraph and telephone) or that were intended as person-to-person communication. Broadcasting is usually associated with radio and television. The receiving parties may include the general public or a relatively small subset; the point is that anyone with the appropriate receiving technology can receive the signal. The field of broadcasting includes a wide range of practices such as public radio, community radio and commercial radio, public television and commercial television. Transmission of radio and television programmes from a radio or television station to home receivers is transmitted using a combination of satellite and wired transmission like cable television are also considered broadcasts and do not require a license. Transmissions of television and radio through digital technology have increasingly been referred to as broadcasting as well, though strictly speaking this is incorrect. During the past years, we have seen as increasing involvement of social media in sports.

Correspondence
Dr. Mahesh Kumar
Associate Professor, Physical
Education, C.R.M. Jat College,
Hisar, Haryana, India

Real time interaction between fans and stars

The real time interaction between social media and sports is closely connected to the interaction between fans and sports stars. Fans want to connect and interact with the stars on the field and vice versa.

How to handle social media – or not?

This growing demand for stars to actively interact with their fans in a constant flow has brought new dilemmas as well as new marketing benefits into sports management. Now sportsmen and fans are also connected through social media channels such as Twitter and Face-book during the entire tournament. Instead, sports management teams could benefit from outlining guidelines through a social media strategy, ensuring that the players don't leak any game strategies or offend fans in drunken tweets or status updates but that they actively interact with their fans in a positive tone to promote both the player and the team. A digital media strategy is increasingly not only an accepted part of sports governing bodies, clubs and players (parties) interaction with the public but a necessary part. This article will look at the importance of interaction with opposed to merely talking at the public. A number of parties appear to have failed to harness the potential digit media offers but those who have understood its capabilities are reaping the benefits in both monetary and non-monetary terms.

Characteristics

Five characteristics of mass communication have been identified by Cambridge University's John Thompson.

- Comprises both technical and institutional methods of production and distribution. This is evident throughout the history of the media, from print to the internet, each suitable for commercial utility.
- Involves the commodification of symbolic forms, as the production of materials relies on its ability to manufacture and sell large quantities of the work. Just as radio stations rely on its time sold to advertisements, newspapers rely for the same reasons on its space.
- Separate contexts between the production and reception of information.
- Its reach to those "far removed" in time and space, in comparison to the producers.
- Information distribution – a "one to many" form of communication, whereby products are mass-produced and disseminated to a great quantity of audiences.

The Sport-Media Partnership

Sports has become big business. It is now a well established global industry with International Olympic Committee. Sport, but not in all its forms, has something to sell. It has its events leagues, clubs and elite performers. Sports can make money but sportsmen get very little part of the earned money by different leagues. The relationship with media is central to the political economy of sport. Through media, we can get all type of informations about sports.

The media involvement to the changing face of sport

Today media, specially television offer sport added attractions in terms of finance from broadcasting fees and exposure to advertisers, sponsors and a wider audience. So, sports organizations are very keen to get involved with media. To some extent, media also has some degree control over sports organizations and sports.

This can be harmful to sports. Competition for broadcasting

rights has dramatic effect on the fees paid to some sports. The sponsor companies spend a lot of money in accommodation, travel and equipment. It is not surprising, therefore, that a media company will exercise considerable control over the event in the form of changes in sports, such as to dates, times and venues. The actual structure and presentational style of an event may be strongly reflective of the media's interests. Sports sovereignty over its own destiny has weakened. Media is playing an important role in both the construction and destruction of sporting structures and practices. The media has also helped in developing the new competitions, events and leagues. New sport forms have appeared and old ones have become of less importance. The rules have been changed and playing conditions revised so as to enhance media coverage. Even the clothes, athletes wear and equipment they use have come to reflect media related interests. Name on the players' kit help the viewers, sponsor's logos proliferate. Sport has become more of a product that is manufactured, bought and sold. The sports organizations have gone alongwith this and have used agents and marketing companies to get their particular products into the media sport market place. Media not only can the sporting day change, but so too can be the reason.

Who are the winners and losers?

The penetration of the media into the world of sport has had an impact on the relatives' status of particular sports and also on the relationships within sports. Sports that are especially attractive to the media have gained for greater status, exposure and economic wealth compared with other sports. The introduction of media money and influence has also had an impact in pulling elite sport away from its roots. The elite performers also become the part of marketing with media and also the part of the vast amounts of media money that have flowed into sport. The elite players get very high salaries aided by agents of any sports companies. Their degree of control over their own lives is brought into question. The media creates sporting personalities to help sell their programmes and newspapers.

The Media Professionals

The media professionals (e.g. producers, directors, commentators, reports and cameramen) exist to produce a media sports package that aims to attract interest and excite their audience. Their emphasis is in making the product attractive and to this end it is sometimes difficult to establish where the sport starts and the media event ends. Selling a television sports programme is the paramount concern. Decisions are taken for the audience, you are directed what to see and read and how to make sense of it. The media professionals construct and frame the sport experience their audience.

Dramatization

A powerful characteristic of media sport production is that of dramatization. The media sets up story lines around the sporting event and the individuals involved. They work to script the event so as to excite. They provide pre-event discussion and analysis. The viewer's appetite is heightened. Suspense, conflict and confrontation are emphasized so as to the dramatic effect. The media claim to get their audience as close as possible to the action. You can see all the actions of the players. Cameras are now even going into the changing rooms. This media creates heroes and villains in the sports.

The Media Sport Audience

A major question surrounding media sport is the role played by audience. Are they knowledgeable about the media sport product to which they exposed? Are they able to make informed choices about what they see, hear and read? But one viewpoint maintains that the audience does not exercise free choice. Their wishes are reflected in the output from the media companies and the professionals who work for them. The choice and knowledge about sports often audiences depend on what the media presents before them.

Thus, we see that media has captured the sports events and choices, knowledge and all other informations about players. On one hand, we feel handicapped about sports without media.

Impacts

Positive Effects: The media coverage of sport has good effects:

- Money – Media companies pay for the rights to show a sporting event. Also, sports shown on the TV generate more sponsorship.
- Education – People learn the rules of the sport from watching it on TV.
- Role Models – Seeing good sports people on TV and in newspapers makes them a role model for people to look upto.
- Inspiration – Media brings sport to people who may not normally get to experience it otherwise. This can encourage people to get involved.
- Coaching aid – Watching professionals on the TV can help you see how a technique should be performed which could help your performance.

Negative Effects: The media can also have a negative effect on sport.

- Bias – Only the really popular sports get much attention on the TV and in newspapers etc. This does not help encourage people into the less popular sports.
- Lack of Attendance – For matches that are shown on TV, ticket sales often drop.
- Overload – There is a lot of sport on TV now-a-days-, some say too much.
- Attention – Sport stars often complain of too much attention being paid to their private lives.
- Demands - The media can put pressure on the organisers of sporting competitions to make the viewing experience better for TV audiences. For example, in a precious Olympics, the marathon was run at a time which suited TV companies, even though it was at the hottest time of day.
- Social media can be useful tool for those teaching a target audience.

Conclusion

- Sport and the media have both a global and a local scope of operation and are bound together in a complex network of relationships.
- Since the 1980s, the value of sport to media companies and their investment in sport have grown dramatically.
- The power of the small number of major media companies raises important issues of access and equity, especially with the growth of pay-to-view sports events.
- While the media have demonstrated a considerable capacity to influence the character and development of

sport, it should be noted that there is little evidence of resistance to commodification from sports bodies or athletes.

- Sports media generally promote and reinforce a distinctive set of values associated with capitalism, nationalism patriarchy and racism.
- The media production process emphasizes spectacle, drama and personalisation.

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